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But after all, admitting that the answers to the first two questions raised in testing the book be favorable, is work of this kind worth doing? Is it desirable that the "general reader" be informed on economic truth and particularly that he be disturbed in his complacency about the present system? There is a distinct tendency evident among British economists to cease from refining economic theory and to turn to a consideration of the means by which the efficiency of the present economic organization may be transmuted into finer living. Hobson in *Work and Wealth*, published after this book was completed, and Smart in his *Second Thoughts*, reviewed on another page in this issue, have like the author of this book voiced this dissatisfaction with the economic judgment of our present productivity. Quantity of product has come to be great enough so that now we may well consider the sacrifice in further increase in product in order to secure a more rational utilization of what we have toward finer living. In such lines of thought, it is better that the lead be taken by trained economists, equipped with all the aid that economic science can give, than that the matter be left to partisan socialist or radical. It is then quite legitimate that books like the one under review be written for the "general reader." Any improvement in the economic system secured as a result of conscious purpose must in democratic countries be the outcome of informed and aroused public opinion. In creating this public opinion upon "the relation of the economic organization to political and ethical aims and standards" the economist ought to play a great part.

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Social Problems. A Study of Present-Day Social Conditions. By EZRA THAYER TOWNE. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1916. Pp. xviii, 406. \$1.00.)

Sociology. By JOHN M. GILLETTE. (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Company. 1916. Pp. 159. 50 cents.)

A text for beginners in the social sciences in high school and college is a pedagogical desideratum of the present—at least for those who perceive that the traditional course in economic theory is not the best introduction to social studies. An ideal text for such a purpose should combine a study of concrete social conditions and problems with just sufficient sound social theory to afford the student some real insight into our social life. Such a

text has not yet been written, and probably will not be written until numerous trials have been made. Professor Towne's book, intended for such beginners, is devoid of even a theoretical background. It is almost entirely an analysis of present conditions and problems, without reference to any general theories. Starting with the usual consideration of natural conditions and population, it takes up such problems as immigration, child labor, women in industry, sweating, labor organizations, and unemployment; then passes to the relative abnormal problems of crime, divorce, the liquor traffic, poverty, with special chapters even on the blind and the deaf, the feeble-minded and the insane; finally ending with three chapters on the conservation movement.

Such a purely factual text is not without its advantages, and if the teacher can furnish the background of theory necessary to knit the facts together, into something like a unified view of our social life, it may work well. Perhaps this view can be adequately furnished to the beginner by Professor Gillette's primer on *Sociology*, which, unlike the previous book, is almost entirely confined to a statement of theory. A statement of theory within such brief compass must necessarily omit much, but the general viewpoint of the book is sound, and it is clearly and interestingly written. The two books might, therefore, be used together with advantage by a teacher who knew how to combine them. They are, at any rate, to be welcomed, as the more experiments we have in the making of texts for beginners the better.

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El Capitalismo y el Problema económico. By AUGUSTO PEREYRA ALCANTARA. (Barcelona: Comas y Portavella. 1914. Pp. 114.)

Spanish history has been so rich in episodes and institutions of more than ordinary economic interest that the existence of a thriving school of economic theory would seem to be almost inevitable. Unfortunately, however, this has by no means been the case. Save for the brilliant group of eighteenth century thinkers, headed by Ustariz, Ulloa, and Campomanes, Spanish economic theorists of even ordinary caliber are very few, and the name of the present author can not be added to the list.

He undertakes to evolve a "new theory of value and of money," the originality of which is supposed to lie in an insistence upon